

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

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R 280330Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9839

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC

UNCLAS SINGAPORE 4944

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR SN HZ

SUBJECT: KIRK VISIT TO SINGAPORE

REF: SINGAPORE 4938

1. NEW ZEALAND PRIME MINISTER KIRK PAID THREE DAY
OFFICIAL VISIT TO SINGAPORE DECEMBER 21-23. KIRK CALLED
ON PRESIDENT SHEARES, HELD TALKS WITH PRIME MINISTER
LEE, DEFENSE MINISTER GOH AND FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM,
ATTENDED STATE DINNER AND MADE MAJOR ADDRESS TO FOREIGN
CORRESPONDENTS ASSOCIATION. OFFICIAL TALKS REPORTED
SEPTEL. VISIT RECEIVED EXTENSIVE FRONT PAGE COVERAGE
LOCAL PRESS. IN HIS PUBLIC REMARKS KIRK MADE
FOLLOWING POINTS OF INTEREST:

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A. NEW ZEALAND POLICY. NEW ZEALAND NO LONGER LOOKED

AT WORLD THROUGH EYES OF OTHERS. CURRENT THRUST OF GNZ POLICIES IS TO BRING NEW ZEALAND FULLY INTO ASIAN/PACIFIC WORLD. IN SO DOING GNZ WOULD NOT ABANDON OLD FRIENDS.

B. DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS. NEW ZEALAND HAS MAINTAINED ITS PARTICIPATION IN COLLECTIVE DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS BECAUSE GNZ ACCEPTS "ASSESSMENT OF OUR FRIENDS THAT THIS IS DESIRABLE IF CONFIDENCE IS TO BE MAINTAINED AT A TIME OF RAPID AND UNCERTAIN CHANGE. WE WILL KEEP OUR FORCES IN THE AREA FOR AS LONG AS THEY ARE WANTED BY THE GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED." DUE TO CHANGE IN AUSTRALIAN POLICIES, NEW ARRANGEMENTS ARE BEING DRAWN UP UNDER WHICH NEW ZEALAND AND UK WILL ESTABLISH INDEPENDENT FORCES IN SINGAPORE. THIS WILL "PROVIDE WIDER SCOPE FOR US TO COOPERATE WITH COUNTRIES IN THIS AREA."

C. REGIONAL COOPERATION. OVER LONG RUN GNZ BELIEVES BEST COURSE IS TO WORK TOWARDS A "COMPREHENSIVE FORUM ENCOMPASSING ALL OF THE COUNTRIES OF EAST AND SOUTH REGULARLY TO TALK OVER THEIR COMMON PROBLEMS -- BOTH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC." NEW ZEALAND RECOGNIZES THAT SEA COUNTRIES ARE NOT READY FOR SUCH AN EXPERIMENT. THERE ARE SEVERAL OTHER MEANS OF WORKING TOWARD THE GOAL OF AN ASIAN PACIFIC FORUM, MOST APPEALING AND PRACTICAL OF WHICH MIGHT BE CALLED "CONVERGENCE OF REGIONAL GROUPINGS" -- ASSOCIATIONS WHOSE INTERESTS OVERLAP. I HAVE SUGGESTED TO INDONESIAN FOREIGN MINISTER AND CHIEF MINISTER OF PNG AN "INFORMAL ARRANGEMENT" AMONG INDONESIA, PNG, AUSTRALIA, AND NEW ZEALAND. SIMILARLY THERE IS SCOPE FOR SUCH A DYNAMIC ASSOCIATION AS ASEAN TO WIDEN ITS FIELD OF COOPERATION WITHOUT CHANGING ITS ESSENTIAL SEA NATURE. THERE ARE UNDOUBTEDLY OTHER GROUPINGS WHICH COULD EMERGE IN THE REGION. IN SYMBOLIC TERMS THIS IDEA CAN BE CONCEIVED AS A "SERIES OF INTER-LOCKING CIRCLES" MUCH AS IN THE EMBLEM OF THE OLYMPIC OR SEAP GAMES.

D. US MILITARY PRESENCE (IN RESPONSE TO REPORTER'S QUESTION). POLITICAL FORCES IN THE AMERICAN ELECTORATE WOULD MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR USG TO CONTEMPLATE EXPANDING UNCLASSIFIED

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ITS MILITARY PRESENCE IN SEA EXCEPT PERHAPS IN CIRCUMSTANCES OF SOME MAJOR CRISIS. FUTURE USG PRESENCE IN THE REGION WILL RELATE MORE TO ACTIVE AND EFFECTIVE DIPLOMATIC AREAS (SIC) THAN ON A MILITARY BASIS.

2. AT STATE DINNER FOR KIRK PRIME MINISTER LEE MADE FOLLOWING COMMENTS:

A. RELATIVELY SIMPLE WORLD KNOWN FOR MANY YEARS AFTER
WORLD WAR II WHEN AMERICAN SUPREMACY AND BRITAIN'S SPECIAL
RELATIONSHIP WITH AMERICA WERE FIXED REFERENCE
POINTS IS NO MORE.

B. SINGAPORE WILL STAY NON-ALIGNED IN WORLD
POLITICS AND AVOID INVOLVEMENT IN SUPERPOWER CONFLICTS.
MAIN PROBLEM IS HOW THIS WILL BE ACHIEVED. AMERICAN
DOMINANCE IN ASIA CAN NO LONGER BE WHAT IT WAS. SOVIET
NAVAL PRESENCE IS INCREASING AND RENEWED PRESENCE OF
CHINA IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IS ACTIVELY FELT.

C. WHATEVER PICTURE WILL EMERGE AS RESULT OF ALTERED
CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE GREAT POWERS, SINGAPORE HOPES TO
KEEP MOST OF THE OLD LINKS TO EASE "OUR ADJUSTMENT INTO
THE MORE COMPLICATED MULTI-POLAR WORLD."

D. SINGAPORE APPRECIATES THE OLD TIES ALL THE MORE
BECAUSE REGIONALISM HAS COME TO SEA AND NEW ZEALAND IS
PART OF ITS WIDER REGION. SEA AND PERHAPS ALSO THE
PACIFIC MUST STRIVE FOR WHATEVER REGIONALISM CAN
YIELD IN ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND POLITICAL STABILITY.

E. "IF WE CAN GEAR THESE REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS INTO
THE ECONOMIC DYNAMOS OF AMERICA, JAPAN AND WESTERN
EUROPE, THEN DEVELOPMENT WILL ENHANCE PEACE AND PROSPERITY.
FOR THESE INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES CAN FURNISH THE CAPITAL,
TECHNOLOGY AND THE MARKETS TO MAKE BETTER STANDARDS OF
LIVING POSSIBLE."
GRANT

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